

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the present amendment and in light of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 5-7, 9, 11, 12, and 15-17 are pending. Claim 7 is withdrawn. In the present amendment, Claims 1, 3, 4, 8, 10, 13, and 14 are canceled; and new Claims 16 and 17 are added. Support for new Claim 16 is found in the original specification at page 22, lines 19-25 and in Claim 1. Support for new Claim 17 is found in the original specification at page 31, lines 14-17. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

A complete response to the Office Action dated February 4, 2010, was filed on July 6, 2010, together with a Request for Continued Examination.

Applicants thank Examiner Louie for the courtesy of an interview granted to Applicants' representative on July 20, 2010, at which time the outstanding issues in this case were discussed. During the interview, Examiner Louie indicated that the amendments made to Claim 5 appeared to overcome the cited art, however the amendments to Claim 1 would not overcome the cited art as the feature of the dummy wafer in Claim 1 was asserted as corresponding to the cleaning wafer of Akahori. The present response constitutes Applicants' statement of substance of the personal interview.

As the present Supplemental Amendment relates solely to the adoption of the Examiner's suggestions made during the interview, it is submitted the present Supplemental Amendment is fully compliant with 37 C.F.R. § 1.111(a)(2)(B), which allows for entry of Supplemental Responses that are clearly limited to the adoption of the Examiner's suggestions. *See* M.P.E.P. § 714.03(a). Accordingly, it is respectfully requested the present Supplemental Amendment be entered.

The present Supplemental Amendment adds new Claim 16 depending from Claim 11 and reciting that "the steps (d) and (f) are performed under the condition that a dummy

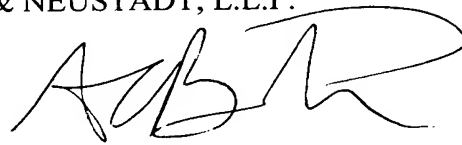
substrate is mounted on the mounting table in the processing chamber.” This feature of the dummy substrate was previously recited in Claim 1 and discussed during the interview. Further, new Claim 17 recites that “when the step (e) is performed, the rare gas penetrates into the oxide film to suppress a film stress in the oxide film.” During the interview, Examiner Louie suggested better distinguishing between the cleaning steps and oxidizing steps. Accordingly, new Claim 17 further defines the oxidizing step (e). Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that new Claims 16 and 17 be entered and allowed.

For the reasons discussed in the present Supplemental Amendment and the Amendment filed on July 6, 2010, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants’ undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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